

THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE MAD

VILLIAN

DAVROS

Insane genius and creator of the Daleks.

The most aggressive, not to mention persistent, alien life forms in the universe are surely the Daleks, the arch enemies of the Time Lord known as The Doctor in the popular BBC series *Doctor Who*.

The Daleks were born out of nuclear conflict when the rival inhabitants of the planet Skaro – the Kaleds (there's an anagram in there) and the Thals – waged a thousand-year war of attrition. A fascist regime that echoed Nazi Germany, the Kaleds' true leader is Davros, head of the Elite Scientific Division charged with ensuring the survival of the race. Left crippled and disfigured after a bomb attack on his laboratory, Davros is consigned to a wheelchair life-support system (appropriately, the base of a Dalek), and equipped with a cyclopean blue visual sensor and an electronically modulated voice prone to uncontrollable ranting.

Like Stephen Hawking, this is a scientist whose frail physical form belies his mental genius. But that's where the resemblance ends – Davros's perspicacity isn't constrained by morality. As the Doctor notes during their initial encounter (*Genesis of the Daleks*, 1975), "He works without conscience, without soul, without pity, and his machines are equally devoid of these qualities."

The machines in question were originally devised as vehicles to house the mutated Kaleds, enabling their continued survival. However,

delusions of grandeur and a "fanatical desire to perpetuate himself in his machine" saw Davros instead surreptitiously creating a master race that he believed would ultimately become the supreme being in the universe. He even went so far as to annihilate his own people when they discovered his true intent and attempted to halt his experiments. The observation of a scientist colleague perhaps best sums up this evil genius: "You are insane, Davros!"

In creating a being driven by its own sense of superiority, Davros himself became superfluous and was summarily "exterminated." But like a cockroach, he proved extremely difficult to kill.

Centuries later, the Daleks exhumed the dormant Davros to help them defeat a robotic adversary (*Destiny of the Daleks*, 1979). Once revived, he quickly resumed his quest to fine-tune the Daleks – his redesigns eventually leading to a civil war amongst his creations (*Remembrance of the Daleks*, 1988).

Always one to have a convenient escape hatch or pod nearby, Davros was the master of the quick getaway and, like the Daleks, will never be truly defeated. Indeed, he has returned time and again in original audio adventures, novels, comic strips and the new series of *Doctor Who*. Davros has been played by actors Michael Wisher, David Gooderson, Terry Molloy and Julian Bleach, and remains as iconic a villain as his creations.



Suggested viewing: Doctor Who: The Complete Davros Collection.

This comprehensive boxed set rounds up all of Davros's appearances in *Doctor Who*, excluding the recent new series episodes *The Stolen Earth* and *Journey's End* (also available on DVD).

The collection also includes the 8 original spin-off Davros audio adventures.